

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended above, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 and 16-28 are currently pending and stand rejected in the current office action.

Throughout this response, "Office Action" refers to the office action dated February 24, 2005 unless otherwise indicated.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Objection to the Abstract

In the office action, the abstract is objected to as being not descriptive, therefore not complying with the requirements of MPEP § 608.01(b) (regarding 37 CFR § 1.72).

Applicants hereby amend the abstract, and respectfully submit the amended abstract fully corrects any deficiencies underlying the objection, placing the abstract into compliance with 37 CFR § 1.72 and MPEP § 608.01(b). Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

The amended abstract provided below replaces the previously provided abstract in its entirety.

ABSTRACT

~~Described herein is a method and apparatus for high-speed address learning in sorted address tables.~~

A high speed learning method and apparatus whereby a portion of a network device memory corresponding to a data table is divided into parts and each part is provided with periodic empty data entry spaces. Data entries are distributed in the data table by a high speed learning engine, maintaining empty data entry spaces in the divided parts. Data entries are added to a table portion by redistributing data entries in only a portion of the data table rather than the entire table, while maintaining the order of data entries in the table.

Objection to the Disclosure

The office action contains an objection to the specification as not including a “Summary of the Invention” section, and requires applicants to amend the patent application to include such a section. Applicants hereby respectfully traverse the objection and respectfully point out to the Examiner that a “Summary of the Invention” section is optional since neither the rules nor the patent statute requires a patent applicant to provide such summary. As discussed in 37 CFR 1.73:

“A brief summary of the invention indicating its nature and substance, which may include a statement of the object of the invention, *should* precede the detailed description. Such summary *should, when set forth*, be commensurate with the invention as claimed and any object recited should be that of the invention as claimed” [emphasis added]. 37 CFR 1.73.

Thus, applicants respectfully point out that the use of the word “should” and the phrase “when set forth” indicates that inclusion of a “Summary of the Invention” section is optional rather than mandatory. As a result, it is believed there is no legal basis upon which to require a patent applicant to provide a “Summary of the Invention” section in a patent application or to require applicants to amend the patent application to include such